
STRAWBERRY HILL

NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY



Glacken Field Tot Lot

A JOINT REPORT OF THE

STRAWBERRY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY COMMITTEE AND

THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

STRAWBERRY HILL

NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

Cambridge City Manager

Robert W. Healy

Deputy City Manager

Richard C. Rossi

Cambridge City Council

Mayor Francis Duchay

Councillor Kathleen Born

Councillor Henrietta Davis

Councillor Anthony D. Galluccio, Vice Mayor

Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves

Councillor Sheila Russell

Councillor Michael Sullivan

Councillor Timothy Toomey, Jr.

Councillor Katherine Triantafillou

Cambridge Planning Board

Paul Dietrich, Chair

Carolyn Mieth, Vice Chair

Alfred Cohn

Florrie Darwin

Scott Lewis

Hugh Russell

Hugo Salemme

William Tibbs

Published 1999

Credits

Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Study Committee

Theodore Anastos, resident, Huron Avenue
Archie Arpiarian, resident, Locust Terrace
Patricia Barger, resident, Huron Avenue
Peter Casler, resident, Holworthy Street
Paul E. Fallon, resident, Huron Avenue
Edmund G. Hamann, resident, Holworthy Street
Mary E. Lyons, resident, Holworthy Street
Laura G. Moore, resident, Huron Avenue
Mary Parkin, resident, Thingvalla Avenue
Effie Schumaker, Norumbega Street
Victoria Tamas, resident, Cushing Street
Becky Taylor, resident, Cushing Street

Community Development Department Project Staff

Venita Mathias, Neighborhood Planner
Stuart Dash, Director of Community Planning
Clifford M. Cook, Planning Data Manager
Robin Shore, Graphics Director

Additional Participating Staff

Lester Barber, Land Use and Zoning Director

J. Roger Boothe, Urban Design Director

Susan Clippinger, Director, Department of Traffic,
Parking and Transportation

Bill Deignan, Transportation Improvement Program Coordinator

Kathy Kelsey, Department of Human Service Programs

Michael Nicoloro, Managing Director, Water Department

Chip Norton, Watershed Manager, Water Department

Cara Seiderman, Transportation Program Manager

Elizabeth Sternberg, Housing Project Manager

Charles Sullivan, Director, Historical Commission

Kathy Watkins, Traffic Calming Planner

Additional Participants

Deborah A. Allard, resident, Huron Avenue

Laurie Beth Mangili, resident, May Street

Pat Sullivan, Cambridge Housing Authority

The Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Study Committee and the Community Development Department would like to thank all the Strawberry Hill residents who participated in the public forums held on May 21, 1997 and February 25, 1998.

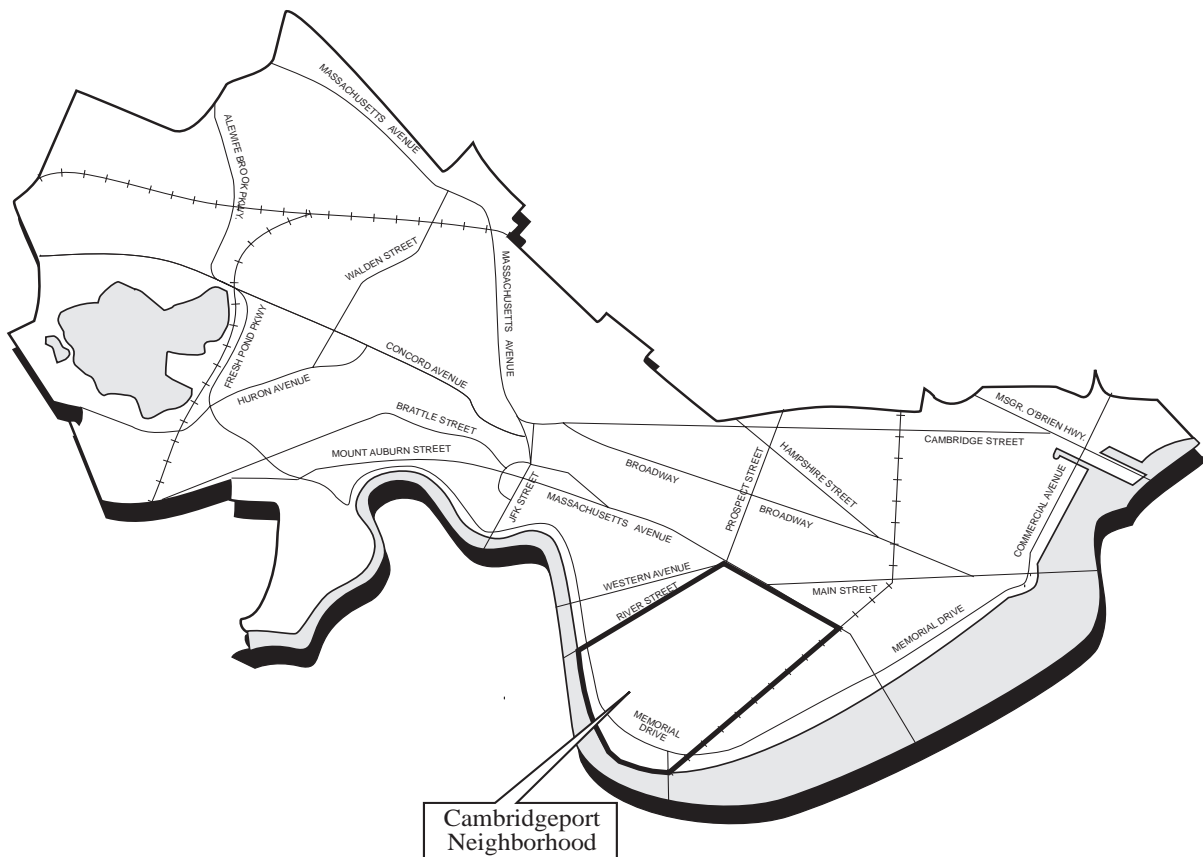
Also, thanks to the Cambridge School Department for allowing us to hold our meetings at the Haggerty School and to Kathy Kelsey of the Haggerty Community School for her assistance and participation.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3	Appendices	
Methodology	9	Appendix I	
Neighborhood Overview	13	City of Cambridge Housing Activity	49
Analysis and Recommendations	17	Appendix II	
Land Use, Urban Design & Zoning	19	Growth Policy	53
Recommendations	21		
Transportation	23	Maps	
Recommendations	25	Neighborhood Location	2
Housing	27	Study Area with Zoning	5
Recommendations	29		
Economic Development & Employment	31		
Recommendations	35		
Open Space	37		
Recommendations	39		
General Recommendations	41		
Conclusion	45		

I N T R O D U C T I O N

City of Cambridge
Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Location



Introduction

THE NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY PROCESS

The neighborhood study process was established in the 1980's to address quality of life issues which concerned Cambridge residents during that time. A wave of commercial growth and economic development in the City and metropolitan region brought an increasing awareness of issues such as congestion and parking problems, the rising cost of housing, and inadequate open space. A downturn in the national and regional economy in the early 1990's has given way to an increase in commercial growth in the City of Cambridge prompting residents concerns about quality of life issues which include density, land use, and traffic.

The Community Development Department's (CDD) neighborhood planning program published the first neighborhood study in 1988 and has completed a comprehensive study in nine of the City's thirteen neighborhoods. The object of the neighborhood studies is to identify major planning problems and concerns in all the City's neighborhoods through a joint CDD and community committee and formulate recommendations for their solutions. The studies address issues such as traffic and transportation, open space, housing affordability and home ownership, neighborhood commercial areas and employment, park maintenance and rezoning of areas now inappropriately zoned. As part of each neighborhood study, CDD collects data on demographic changes since 1980, as well as changes in housing markets, land use, and development potential in each neighborhood.

For each study, the City Manager appoints a committee of neighborhood residents and civic leaders, along with staff from the CDD, to review the data, identify what problems exist in the neighborhood, and make recommendations as to how to resolve these problems. The recommendations are presented to the City Council and, where appropriate, are incorporated into the work programs of City departments for implementation over the next several years.

THE STRAWBERRY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

In 1997, the CDD staff placed advertisements in the local media seeking Strawberry Hill residents to join the upcoming Committee. In 1997, City Manager Robert Healy named 13 of the applicants to the Committee. The newly named members came from different parts of the neighborhood with the aim of representing the demographic diversity of the neighborhood. Some of the members were lifelong residents, while others had lived there less than five years.

The Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Committee met twice a month for fourteen months from February, 1997 until April, 1998. The Committee reviewed, discussed, and debated issues of housing, open space, economic development, land use, zoning and urban design. They listened to a range of speakers from representatives of non-profit agencies working in Strawberry Hill to City staff and toured the neighborhood. Through the discussions, the Committee identified problems around the neighborhood and worked together to

come up with recommendations for each topic. The Committee made presentations during two public forums on each topic they discussed which allowed the forum participants an opportunity to comment on recommendations.

At the end of the process, the Committee produced four pages of recommendations ranging from managing backyard development, establishing an alternative use of the railroad corridor behind Huron Avenue and Mt. Auburn Street, to creation of an independent neighborhood association. The Committee offers this study and its recommendations to the Strawberry Hill community as a means to create a long-term planning guide for the neighborhood and to secure its well-being in the years to come.

THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE GROWTH POLICY

The Neighborhood Study process is seen as an extension of the City's Growth Policy. The Growth Policy document, "Towards a Sustainable Future," is endorsed by the City Council and outlines the City's planning assumptions and

policies in the areas of land use, housing, transportation, economic development, open space and urban design. The document was drafted by CDD staff in 1992-1993 after a series of workshops with citizen, business and institutional representatives. It recognizes that the City's diversity of land uses, densities and population groups should be retained and strengthened. The document also calls for careful development of the City's evolving industrial districts, such as Alewife and lower Cambridgeport.

While the growth policy document is comprehensive, it does not prescribe land uses or designs for specific sites. Each of the City's 13 neighborhoods has distinct needs and resources which can be identified and addressed through neighborhood studies and the City's planning policies. The Growth Policy and neighborhood studies complement each other by informing the Cambridge community of important issues, recommending a plan of action to address the concerns, and utilizing current policies to implement change.

Strawberry Hill Neighborhood Zoning Map

